

FNC's *Fox & Friends*

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AINSLEY EARHARDT: It is hard to believe but today marks one year since the passing of radio icon Rush Limbaugh. I had a chance to sit down with his wife Kathryn to reflect on his life and his legacy, and what he would think of America today. Watch this exclusive interview.

RUSH LIMBAUGH: Greetings and welcome back. Rush Limbaugh here behind the golden IMB microphone.

EARHARDT: Thank you so much for welcoming us into your beautiful home. How are you doing? It's been a year now.

KATHRYN LIMBAUGH: I'm doing well for the most part. You know, it's been very difficult, but knowing how many people are out there praying for me, praying for Rush, I very much think this was the nation's loss.

EARHARDT: When we pulled into your driveway and we walked in, I felt his presence. There are so many wonderful symbols of America throughout this house and that was important to him, right?

K. LIMBAUGH: To me, it really represents Rush in so many ways, not because of the grandness of it. That's not really him. It represents success, American freedom.

EARHARDT: I'm sure he always felt like I'm going to be big. God gave me this voice —

R. LIMBAUGH: Rush Limbaugh, with talent on loan from God.

EARHARDT: — but when did it actually happen for him?

K. LIMBAUGH: He would like to say when he was eight and he was broadcasting from his bedroom down to his mother and brother, but the big break probably was New York.

R. LIMBAUGH: As usual, doing this program with half my brain tied behind my back to make it fair.

EARHARDT: What was he like when he was off the air? What were his hobbies?

K. LIMBAUGH: He was always mentally engaged, whether it was watching a television program or reading his iPad. He always said that life is show prep and I think it was very much, in his case.

R. LIMBAUGH: Every day I wake up and the first thing I do is thank God that I did.

EARHARDT: His faith grew later in life and especially toward the end. What — can you describe what his faith was like?

K. LIMBAUGH: Absolutely, he knew there was a much higher plan, a much higher purpose. He believed strongly in his relationship with God.

R. LIMBAUGH: I don't like making things about me but there are going to be days that I'm not going to be able to be here.

EARHARDT: When you hear cancer —

K. LIMBAUGH: Ummhmm.

EARHARDT: — your life changes —

K. LIMBAUGH: Yes.

EARHARDT: — forever. I remember him saying that.

R. LIMBAUGH: Life is the most precious thing we have, especially when right in front of you is the prospect of it being taken away.

K. LIMBAUGH: One of the perks, I guess, of having a diagnosis like this is that you have a little bit of time to hear some of the wonderful eulogies.

DONALD TRUMP [on 02/04/20]: He is the greatest fighter and winner that you will ever meet.

HARRIS FAULKNER [on FNC's *Outnumbered*, 02/17/21]: And we break in now with breaking news as we have learned that longtime conservative radio host Rush Limbaugh has died.

EARHARDT: You were on air immediately sharing that news.

K. LIMBAUGH [on 02/17/21]: It is with profound sadness our beloved Rush passed away this morning. [BACK PRESENT] I wanted them to hear that devastating news in the most familiar way possible. I knew this audience would remember where they were when they lost their hero.

EARHARDT: What did you love the most about him, and what do you miss the most?

K. LIMBAUGH: He's one of a kind. He always led us to believe that America's best days are ahead. He would say I'm just a voice on the radio, but he was so much more. I call him America's Winston Churchill.

R. LIMBAUGH [on 02/28/09]: I want the country to survive. I want the country to succeed.

EARHARDT: The impact that your family has on this country — has that hit you?

K. LIMBAUGH: Absolutely. Rush is buried in St. Louis. There's two benches because I thought anyone who goes to visit him would want to talk with him. I happened to be sitting there when out of nowhere a man gave me his rosary that he had brought there to give to Rush and in that time, I felt he's still with us.

EARHARDT: How beautiful.

K. LIMBAUGH: He's living on through these people.

EARHARDT: Is there anything on his bucket list that he wanted to do?

K. LIMBAUGH: For him, the bucket list was continuing to be on the program, continuing to fight for the people that he believed needed a voice.

R. LIMBAUGH: There's a whole lot of people that have not given up, namely you.

EARHARDT: He always knew exactly how to phrase what America was thinking.

K. LIMBAUGH: I really think he was genius-level brilliant.

R. LIMBAUGH: I'm having a good time and that's why they're mad at me, folks.

K. LIMBAUGH: He hardly ever had um, he'd hardly have a pause. He always had the ability to make very complex issues very easy to understand.

R. LIMBAUGH: Of course, I'm going to break it down into many, many details for you.

EARHARDT: You are a wonderful wife. You continue to share your thanks and your love for the people listening.

K. LIMBAUGH: Rush always said that this audience meant everything to him and we want that to carry on and make sure that we continue our American values. That we continue to have pride for our symbols.

EARHARDT: We miss Rush during these times. What would he say about the last year?

K. LIMBAUGH: I think he would be rather furious. He would be upset with — with the United States not being as strong as it has been and should be. I know he would say it's not time to panic.

R. LIMBAUGH: Well, it's never time to panic, folks. It is never, ever going to be time to give up on our country. It'll never be time to give up on the United States. It'll never be time to give up on yourself.

STEVE DOOCY: That's great.

EARHARDT: She wanted me to tell everyone who's watching: thank you so much for the outpouring of support, all the letters, all the flowers, they cover the gates at the end of the driveway. Fans would come by there and put mini-microphones and flowers and notes.

DOOCY: Imagine a lot today.

EARHARDT: Yes, probably a lot today too down at their house in Palm Beach. Medal of Freedom — she said that meant so much to him. He had a procedure that night. He was at the hospital and they got where that he needed to come to the White House. He didn't know why — or to the Capitol. So, they had to rush to find an outfit. They did not have dressy clothes with them. So, they just — she said that was a story in and of itself. They finally get to the Capitol, and he was so we just touched by that moment you saw when he was crying. She said the last moments, they were upstairs in the master bedroom, which she put me through which was pretty chilling because I knew that's where he took his last breath. They prayed quietly together and just private prayers between the two of them. The scholarship — his legacy is living on the next generation because the family has now put together — Kathryn, has worked with the foundation to give away scholarship money to anyone who feels like Rush does who loves this country as much as Rush does. You can fill out the form on the website. It's officialrushlimbaugh.com. And the family, our thoughts — y'all are in our thoughts and our prayers today, we love the family. David is a friend of ours. David Limbaugh, his brother and David's daughter, Christen works here at Fox. So — and just thank you to Kathryn for opening up her home — her beautiful home to all of us, so that we could all pay tribute to Rush today.

DOOCY: Absolutely. It's hard to believe that it was a year. It was towards the end of October 2020 and Rush was still doing his radio show. And I reached out to him and said, hey, would you like to come on *Fox & Friends* and talk about the election between Donald Trump and Joe Biden? He said, you know, I'm not feeling great. The night before the election, 7:30 at night, he reached out to me. The night before the election and he said, "hey, can I still come on?" And it's like the show was already completely formatted. I said absolutely. Let me talk to the producers and we figured out a time and he came on and he — we did two segments with him. It was great and that was his last TV interview.

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